

Statement of Economic Interest Form for Candidates

DUE WITH NOMINATION PAPERS

Milwaukee is known for good government and high ethical standards. Each employee, official, and board/commission member adds to this well deserved reputation through conduct that shows integrity and concern for public interest. Ethical behavior involves using good judgment and common sense in performing duties and responsibilities.

All employees, officials, and board/commission members are covered by the City Code of Ethics (Chapter 303, Code of Ordinances) which describes standards of conduct and conflicts of interest. The Milwaukee Common Council determines which individuals are required to file the Statement of Economic Interest pursuant to Chapter 303. These persons include:

- All elected City Officials
- City employees identified by Department Heads as having discretionary powers
- Members and nominees of designated boards and commissions.
- Candidates for Elective Office

Pursuant to Chapter 303-11-d-2, Milwaukee Code of Ethics, if a candidate fails to file a statement of economic interests...within the required time, the candidate's name shall be omitted from the election ballot.

The Ethics Board takes the information you provide in the Statement of Economic Interest seriously. Each form is checked when it arrives for general completion. Later in the spring, the Board conducts a random review of the entire filing. Some forms may be returned with requests for clarification or completion.

For questions regarding the City of Milwaukee Ethics Code please contact the City of Milwaukee Ethics Board Office at **(414) 286-8641** or visit our web site at **www.milwaukee.gov** and click on City Departments.

Thank you,

Your Milwaukee Ethics Board

Kit Halloran, Acting Chair

Martha Toran, DonThielke, Mary Jo Avery,

D. Michael Guerin, Devon Turner

(FOR LOCAL AND STATE ETHICS GUIDELINES SEE REVERSE)

LOCAL GUIDELINES

As you go about your official duties, please keep these general guidelines in mind:

- A city employe or official should not accept anything of value that could appear to influence his/her public duties.
- A city employe or official should not accept anything of value that could appear to be a reward for action taken in his/her public duties.
- A city employe or official should not use his/her public position for personal gain or for the gain of immediate family members or for organizations in which he/she has an interest.
- A city employe or official should not use work place information that is unavailable to the public, for personal gain.
- Contracts of more than \$3,000 between a city employe or official and the city are prohibited without written disclosure to the Ethics Board and to the contracting department.
- A city employe or official should not represent persons, for compensation, before city departments, commissions, or boards unless as part of his/her official duties or at a recorded open hearing.
- For 12 months after leaving city employment, an employe or official may not represent, for compensation, persons before city departments, commissions or boards related to his/her former position.

These comments are only a general description of parts of the Ethics code itself. The actual statutes, rules, and opinion summaries, as well as the Ethics Board itself, should be consulted when questions arise. The complete text of the ethics code can be found in Chapter 303 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances. City departments also have copies of the code for posting.

STATE GUIDELINES

Many city officials are also covered by the requirements for Local Officials put forth in the Wisconsin State Statutes. The State Code of Ethics for Local Officials does not apply to all city employees and officials. Section 19.59 of the Wisconsin Statutes cover:

- Elected officials
- Individuals appointed to a position for a specified term
- Individuals who serve in a position at the pleasure of the local government's governing body or executive

Positions within City government that fit this definition are not only covered by local ethics code but also have responsibilities to conform to the requirements of the State of Wisconsin Ethics Code for Local Officials as well.

We are attaching an additional sheet highlighting some of the restrictions in that statute. Please take a few moments to review these guidelines. Our Board recommends that you keep them on file for future reference. If you have any questions regarding the State Guidelines for Local Officials please contact the State of Wisconsin Ethics Board at (608) 266-8123.

Local officials' receipt of food, drink, favors, services, etc.

ITEMS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED

Wisconsin law forbids a public official to use free or discounted transportation, traveling accommodation, or communication services for which the supplier would usually charge [§946.11, Wisconsin Statutes; Art. 13, §11, Wisconsin Constitution],¹ otherwise—

Consistent with the statutes administered by the Ethics Board, *local public officials*² *may accept and retain*:³

a. ITEMS AND SERVICES UNRELATED TO PUBLIC POSITION.

Food, drink, transportation, lodging, items, and services which are offered for a reason unrelated to the recipient's holding a public position [§ 19.59(1)(a)] and which could not reasonably be expected to influence an official's vote, official actions or judgment, nor reasonably be considered a reward for any official action or inaction;

b. EXPENSES PROVIDED BY OR FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNIT.

Food, drink, transportation, lodging, or payment or reimbursement of costs that are provided by or for the benefit of the local governmental unit, not for a private benefit [§ 19.59]; and

c. ITEMS OF INSUBSTANTIAL VALUE.

Mere tokens and items or services of only nominal, insignificant, or trivial value.

See other side 

¹ Consult local ordinances and other state law not administered by the Ethics Board for any additional restrictions.

² "Local public officials" include: (a) elected officers of political subdivisions and special purpose districts of the state; (b) county administrators or administrative coordinators; (c) city or village managers; (d) individuals appointed to a position in a political subdivision or special purpose district for a specified term; and (e) individuals appointed to a position by the governing body, executive, or administrative head of a political subdivision or special purpose district and serving at the pleasure of the appointing authority.

³ In the case of a local public official who also holds a state public office or a state job an element of which is administrative, consult the Ethics Board's publication for state officials rather than this flyer.

Restraints on local officials' receipt of food, drink, favors, services, etc.

STATUTORY RESTRAINTS

Except as noted on the other side of the page, *local public officials should not accept:*

1. ITEMS OR SERVICES OFFERED BECAUSE OF PUBLIC POSITION.

Any item or service, including food, drink, and travel, of more than nominal value offered because of the person's holding a public office [§ 19.59(1)(a)];

2. ITEMS THAT COULD INFLUENCE JUDGMENT.

Any item or service that could reasonably be expected to influence an official's vote, official actions or judgment [§19.59(1)(b)];

3. REWARDS FOR OFFICIAL ACTION.

Any item or service that could reasonably be considered a reward for any official action or inaction; and

4. TRANSPORTATION OR TRAVELING ACCOMMODATIONS.

Transportation, traveling accommodation, or communication services for which the supplier would usually charge [§946.11; Art. 13, §11, PP.].

**To analyze a situation in which you are offered
items or services, ask yourself these questions:**

1. With respect to the item or service offered:
 - a. Is it being offered because of my public position?
 - b. Is it of more than nominal or insignificant value?
 - c. Is it primarily for my personal benefit rather than for the benefit of my local unit of government?

If you answer "yes" to all three questions, you may not accept the item or service.

2. Would it be reasonable for someone to believe that the item or service is likely to influence my judgment or actions or that it is a reward for past action?

If you answer "yes," you may not accept the item or service.

**If you have any doubts about a situation,
seek advice from your local governmental attorney.**

See other side 

This is a guide. For authoritative information consult Wisconsin Statutes.
Specific questions may be directed to your local governmental attorney or local ethics board.

Prepared by the Wisconsin Ethics Board. July 1992; rev. June 1994.

Obtain revised version after January 2004.

<http://ethics.state.wi.us>.